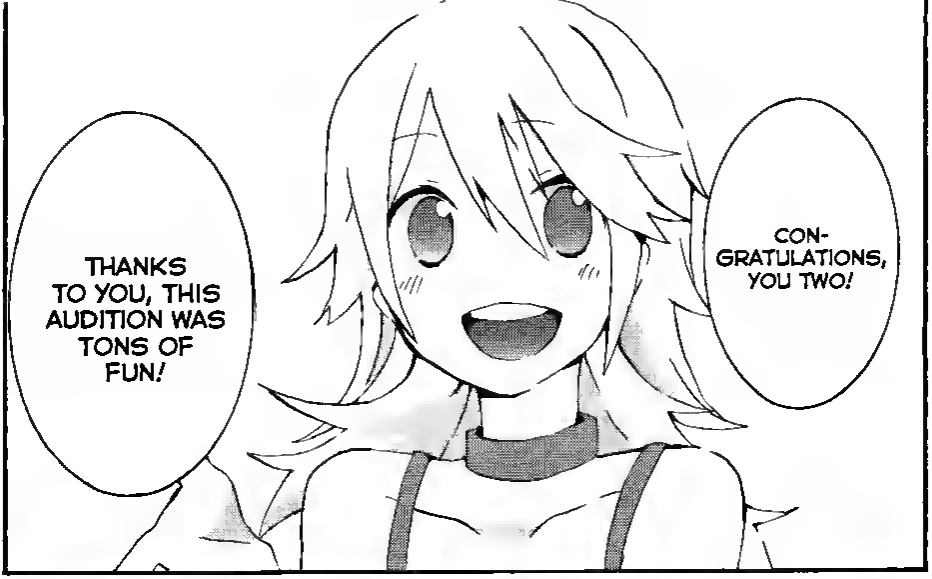
CON-GRATULATIONS, YOU TWO!
THANKS TO YOU, THIS AUDITION WAS TONS OF FUN!

I GUESS I STILL CAN'T LET MY GUARD DOWN YET.
I LOST THIS ONE BUT NEXT TIME WE MEET, I'M GETTING SERIOUS...

LET'S BE GREAT RIVALS FROM NOW ON.
Y...YEAH!!
I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO IT, MIKI-SENPAI!!
STEP 10

STEP
10
Unexpected Test

AND THEN, AND THEN, MIKI-SENPAI WAS LIKE,
"I HOPE WE SHARE A STAGE AGAIN SOME DAY" TO ME!!
AND ERI-SAN ALSO LOOKED AMAZING WHEN SHE WAS DANCING AND
I WAS REALLY MOVED!!
DID YOU SEE TOO, MANAMI-SAN!? IT WAS AWE-SOME!
YEAH. YOU TWO WERE GREAT.
THAT WAS THE FIRST TIME I'VE HEARD THAT KIND OF CHEERING AT AN AUDI-TION.
YOU'VE GROWN A LOT TOO.
I'M KIND OF HAPPY.

HUH!?
ANYWAY, AI-CHAN... I'M SORRY BUT COULD YOU GO TO TODAY'S JOB ALONE?
ARE YOU SAYING I WAS AT THE LEVEL OF A GERM WHEN I STARTED!!
WHEN WE FIRST MET, THIIIIIS IS WHAT YOU WERE LIKE!
ちま
SORRY...I HAVE SOMETHING I CAN'T MISS.
I'M SURE I CAN MAKE IT TOMORROW!
YOU CAN'T COME TODAY EITHER?
IT'S ALWAYS LIKE THIS WITH YOU LATELY!!
W...WELL, IT'S FINE IF SHE CAN COME TOMORROW.
MANAMI-SAN IS RUNNING AROUND A LOT LATELY SO I'LL JUST DEAL WITH IT!!
DO YOUR BEST!

NOT TODAY EITHER?!
HUH?!
AI-CHA...
TODAY'S IS AT A STUDIO I'VE NEVER BEEN TO BEFORE SO I'M TOO WORRIED TO GO ALONE!!
YOU'RE SUCH A LIAR! DIDN'T YOU SAY YOU'D COME NEXT TIME!!!
わーん
I'M REALLY SORRY!! THE PRESIDENT CALLED ME AND...
DON'T CRY, AI-CHAN.
...

YOU CAN'T KEEP DEPENDING ON ME.
すっ
YOU'RE ALREADY A SPLENDID IDOL.
SO IT CAN'T ALWAYS BE LIKE THAT, YOU KNOW?

WHAT...? WAS SHE...
ANGRY JUST NOW...?
MANAMI-SAN WAS....?
じぃ...
H... HMPH! IT'S THAT LYING MANAMI-SAN'S FAULT!
I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING!
I CAN MAKE IT TO THAT NEW STUDIO ON MY OWN!!
ふがっ
HUH!?
I'M LOST!?

YOU'RE KILLING ME HERE, HIDAKA-SAN..! I FIGURED YOU WERE JUST A LITTLE LATE..
BUT THE SHOOT IS ABOUT TO START!!
WHERE ARE YOU RIGHT NOW!?
WHAT ABOUT YOUR MANAGER?
I'M SORRYYYY
IT TURNS OUT I'M ALONE TODAY.
I DON'T KNOW THIS STREET AND FOR SOME REASON I DON'T KNOW WHERE I AM..!

UH... HUH?
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
HIDAKA-SAN?

THEN TAKE A TAX!!! DO YOU HAVE THE MONEY?
AH, YEAH. IT'S RIGHT...

EXCUSE ME, WE'RE READY TO GO.
AH, DAMN IT...
OH NO, DID I DROP IT...?
WHERE...!?
WHERE'S MY WALLET !!?
HIDAKA-SAN!?
WELL!?
WE'LL FIGURE OUT HOW TO FILL THAT SPOT.
UM, WAIT!!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, HIDAKA-SAN.
WHA!?

WHAT DO I DO!!!
HELLO!
SORRY, HELLO.
ナデナデ
I MUST HAVE DROPPED IT SOMEWHERE.
A...ANYWAY, I NEED TO FIND MY WALLET FIRST...
WHERE COULD IT BE?
MY PHONE'S BATTERY IS ALREADY DEAD SO I CAN'T GO HOME LIKE THIS.

HYA!!
HEY YOU, WHAT'S UP?
THE SUN'S SETTING TOO...
WHAT AM I DOING...
SO TALL.
IT'S DANGEROUS TO WALK AROUND HERE ALONE.
SCARY...
OH, ARE YOU LOST OR SOME-THING?
THEN HOW ABOUT WE HELP YOU OUT?
AH... AH...

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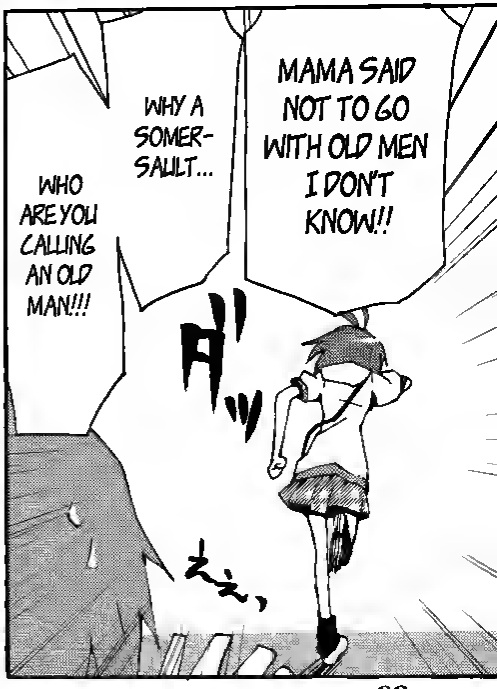
I'M SCARED
I CAN'T TAKE IT.
I KNEW I WAS HELPLESS WITHOUT MANAMI-SAN!


MAMA SAID NOT TO GO WITH OLD MEN I DON'T KNOW!!
WHY A SOMER-SAULT...
WHO ARE YOU CALLING AN OLD MAN!!!
えぇ

MANAMI-SAN,
MANA-MI-SAN
I COULD ALWAYS TAKE IT EASY ON THE WAY.
EVEN IN NEW TOWNS, IF MANA-MI-SAN WAS THERE
IT'S SO SCARY COMING HERE ALONE.
HURRY UP AND FIND ME.
MANAMI-SAN...

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MANAMI-SA...!?
EEK.

UM... UM... THIS...
I-IT'S YOUR WALLET... ISN'T IT?
!?
だっ!
I-I LOST SIGHT OF YOU BEFORE I COULD CALL OUT...
I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU...
IS THAT SO...

SOUNDS LIKE YOU'VE HAD A ROUGH DAY...
YOU REALLY SAVED ME, MA'AM.
IF I DIDN'T FIND MY WALLET, I DON'T THINK I COULD EVER GET HOME.
I...

UUU, THAT'S SO SAD...!!
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!?

U-UM, MA'AM?
ぼろ。
ぼろぼろぼろ
I'M SORRY. I CRY EASILY.!

IF THAT'S TRUE, E-EVEN THOUGH I SHOULD BE THE ONE CHEERING YOU UP
I'M JUST USELESS AND IN THE WAY.

STOP IT. YOU'LL SUFFOCATE IF YOU BURY YOURSELF HERE!!
COME OUT.
WOAH!!
I-I'LL DIG A HOLE AND BURY MYSELF RIGHT HERE!!
OH... YES... I DOUBT YOU KNOW ME BUT...
HUH!? TV STUDIO ... YOU SAID?
I-IT'S NOT JUST YOUR PROBLEM...
UU... SORRY... BUT I KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE LATE TO A TV STUDIO AND GET YELLED AT TOO.
WHAA!?
I-I'M SORT OF AN IDOL TOO.

HAGIWARA YUKIHO-SAN!
THEN YOU'RE...
HUH... NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, I HAVE SEEN YOU ON TV HERE AND THERE.

I'VE ALSO... SEEN YOU AROUND BEFORE.
HIDAKA AI-CHAN... WAS IT?
THAT'S RIGHT!!
WOW, YOU GOT IT.
YOU KNOW OF ME?
OF COURSE I DO!! YOU'RE SEVERAL TIMES MORE POPULAR THAN ME AND A HUGE CELEBRITY!!
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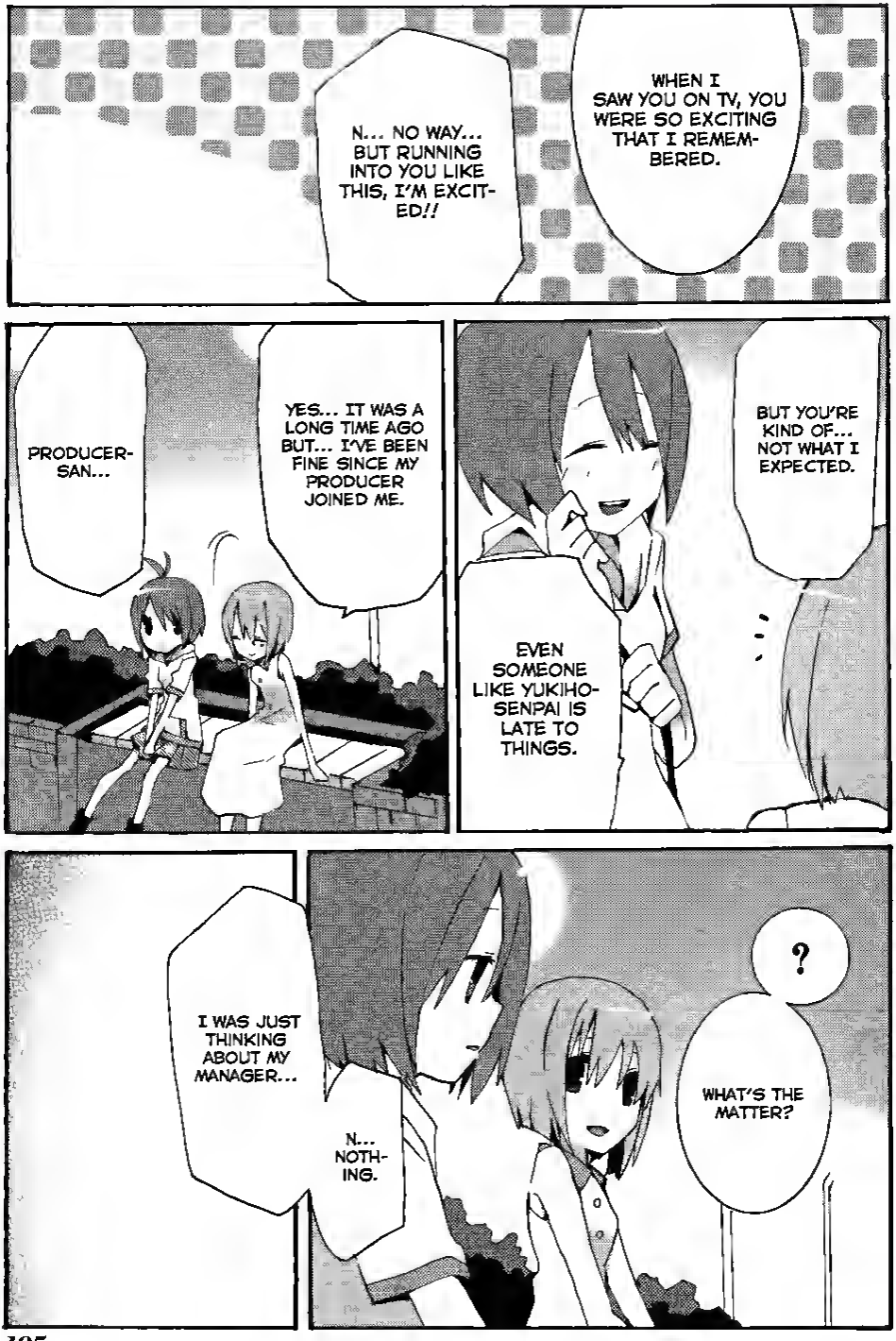
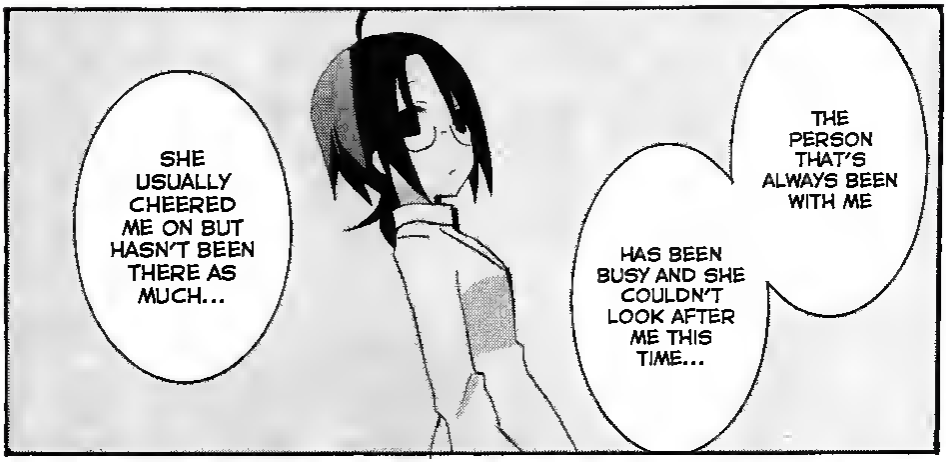
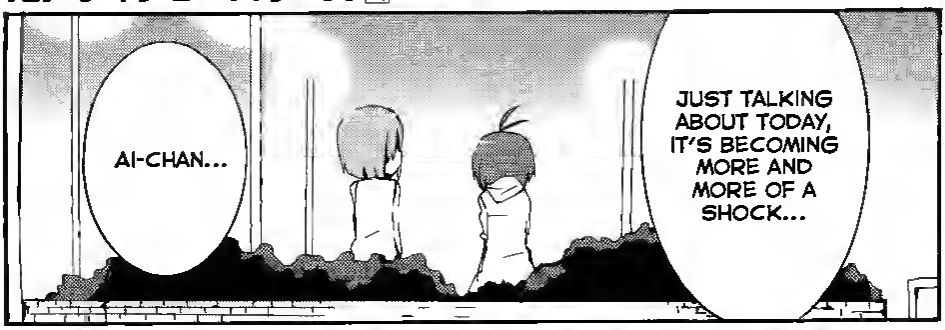

WHEN I SAW YOU ON TV, YOU WERE SO EXCITING THAT I REMEMBERED.
N... NO WAY... BUT RUNNING INTO YOU LIKE THIS, I'M EXCITED!!
PRODUCER-SAN...
YES... IT WAS A LONG TIME AGO BUT... I'VE BEEN FINE SINCE MY PRODUCER JOINED ME.
BUT YOU'RE KIND OF... NOT WHAT I EXPECTED.
EVEN SOMEONE LIKE YUKIHO-SENPAI IS LATE TO THINGS.
?
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
I WAS JUST THINKING ABOUT MY MANAGER...
N... NOTHING.


THE PERSON THAT'S ALWAYS BEEN WITH ME
HAS BEEN BUSY AND SHE COULDN'T LOOK AFTER ME THIS TIME...
SHE USUALLY CHEERED ME ON BUT HASN'T BEEN THERE AS MUCH...

...WHEN I THINK THAT, I CAN'T HELP BUT GET MORE WORRIED...

MAYBE SHE'S SICK OF ME BECAUSE I CAN'T DO ANY-THING ALONE...

I'M ALWAYS SPOILED AND
MAYBE SHE REALLY HATES THAT.


AI-CHAN...
JUST TALKING ABOUT TODAY, IT'S BECOMING MORE AND MORE OF A SHOCK...

IT'S OKAY.

IT'S ALL FOR THE SAKE OF HELPING ME TO GROW.
MY PRODUCER GETS STRICT WITH ME FROM TIME TO TIME TOO BUT...

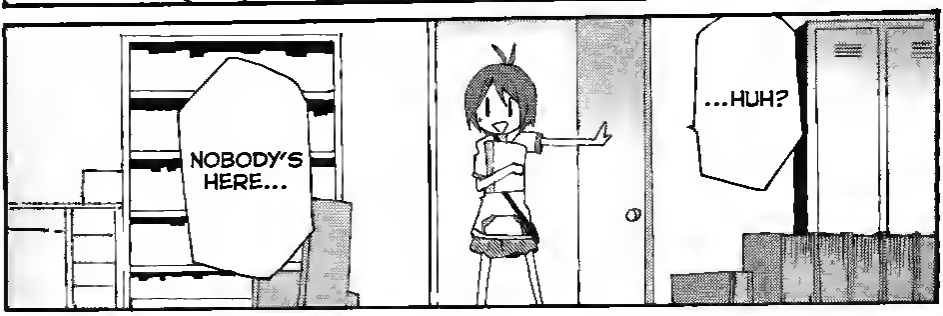
I KNOW THAT PERSON IS JUST WORRYING ABOUT YOU.
IF SHE'S BEEN TRYING HARD WITH YOU SO FAR,
THERE'S NO WAY SHE WOULD HATE YOU THAT EASILY.

BESIDES, MAYBE SHE'S JUST TIRED FROM WORK.
I THINK MAYBE YOU SHOULD GET SOMETHING SWEET AS A PRESENT...
YUKIHO-SENPAI...

I... I GUESS YOU'RE RIGHT?
THANK YOU. I FEEL A LITTLE BETTER...
I SHOULD HURRY BACK TO THE OFFICE!!

YEAH!
YOU CAN DO IT!
YES.
LET ME REPAY YOU FOR THE WALLET SOME TIME!!
I'LL SAY THANKS FOR EVERY-THING.
...THAT'S RIGHT.
I'LL PICK UP MY FAVORITE SUGAR PIE.
AND THEN MANAMI-SAN WILL
DEFINITELY FEEL BETTER TOO!

MANAMI-SAAAN!!
HAVE A LOOK, I BROUGHT YOU A...


...HUH?
NOBODY'S HERE...

OH, WELCOME BACK, HIDAKA-SAN.
OH, OZAKI-SAN!! KNOW WHERE MANAMI-SAN WENT?
ERI WENT SHOPPING! SHE SAID WE'RE HAVING CURRY FOR DINNER.
NO, UM... I DIDN'T...

WHERE'S MANAMI-SAN...?
OH. OKAMOTO-SAN WENT TO THE CONFERENCE ROOM WITH THE PRESIDENT TO TALK A LITTLE WHILE AGO.
THE CONFER-ENCE ROOM... WITH THE PRESI-DENT...?
UH-HUH... THE ATMOSPHERE WAS KIND OF HEAVY SO IT MUST HAVE BEEN ABOUT THAT MATTER.
WHAT MATTER...?
AT ANY RATE, IT WAS SO SUDDEN THAT I WAS PRETTY SURPRISED TOO.

I COULDN'T BELIEVE OKAMOTO-SAN WOULD JUST QUIT LIKE THAT.
-HUH?

OVER THAT WAY.
WHERE'S MY WALLET!!